

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of building a multi-layer graph for greater than two dimensional integrated circuit routing, the method comprising:

generating a plurality of subgraphs, each of the plurality of subgraphs corresponding to each of a plurality of layers of circuitry, each of the plurality of subgraphs including a plurality of segments based on information from other layers of circuitry; and
combining all of the plurality of subgraphs into a single, multi-layer graph.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the information from the other layers of circuitry includes segments from the other layers and intersection points of all such segments.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the generating the plurality of subgraphs comprises the following steps:

generating a first set to include a plurality of graph segments having a first orientation from a first layer and from any other layers disposed in a first direction from the first layer;
inserting in the first set a plurality of graph segments having the first orientation from any other layers disposed in a second direction from the first layer;
generating a second set to include a plurality of graph segments having a second orientation from the first layer and any other layers disposed in a first direction from the first layer; and
inserting in the second set a plurality of graph segments having the second orientation from any other layers disposed in a fourth direction from the first layer.

4. The method of claim 3 further comprising generating the first and second sets for each one of the plurality of layers of circuitry.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the generating the plurality of subgraphs further comprises generating a third set, the third set including intersection points of graph segments in the first and second sets, and minimal segments from the first and second sets.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of providing a subgraph including the intersection points as nodes of the subgraph and the minimal segments as edges between the nodes.

7. The method recited in claim 3 wherein the first and second orientations are substantially orthogonal.

8. The method recited in claim 3 wherein the first and third directions are substantially identical to each other and substantially orthogonal to the first layer, and the second and fourth directions are substantially identical to each other and substantially opposite to the first and third directions.

9. The method recited in claim 3 wherein the generating the first set comprises:

recording first information regarding locations of each successive intersection with elements in a first layer while proceeding from a first edge of the first layer to a second edge of the first layer; and
adding second information regarding coverage of the locations by elements of other layers.

10. The method recited in claim 9 wherein the first information includes a plurality of points at intersections of a sweep line and obstacle edges.

11. The method recited in claim 9 wherein the second information includes a marking of each of the plurality of points indicating possible coverage of each point by elements in other layers disposed in the first direction from the first layer.

12. The method recited in claim 9 wherein the adding of the second information occurs substantially concurrently with the recording of the first information.

13. The method recited in claim 9 wherein the generating the first set further comprises creating vertical graph segments based on the first and second information.

14. An integrated circuit made by a process including the steps of claim 1.

15. A method of routing through a route space including a plurality of route layers, the method comprising the steps of:

generating a subgraph for each of the routing layers, each subgraph corresponding to a routing layer and including a plurality of route segments based on information from the corresponding routing layer and a plurality of route segments based on information from other routing layers; and
generating a multi-layer route graph, the multi-layer route graph including a plurality of the generated subgraphs.

16. A product for receiving routing data regarding a multi-layer routing problem and for generating a multi-layer graph to facilitate resolution of the routing problem, the product comprising:

a first module for generating a plurality of subgraphs, each of the plurality of subgraphs corresponding to each of a plurality of layers of the routing data, each of the plurality of subgraphs including a plurality of segments based on information from other layers of the routing data; and
a second module for combining all of the plurality of subgraphs into a single, multi-layer graph.

17. The product of claim 16 wherein the first module includes instructions for recording information regarding segments from the other layers and intersection points of all such segments.

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18. The product of claim 16 wherein the first module is a software module and comprises:

- 7 at least one instruction for generating a first set to include a plurality of graph segments having a first orientation from a first layer and from any other layers disposed in a first direction from the first layer;
- at least one instruction for inserting in the first set a plurality of graph segments having the first orientation from any other layers disposed in a second direction from the first layer;
- at least one instruction for generating a second set to include a plurality of graph segments having a second orientation from the first layer and any other layers disposed in a first direction from the first layer; and
- at least one instruction for inserting in the second set a plurality of graph segments having the second orientation from any other layers disposed in a fourth direction from the first layer.

19. The product of claim 18 wherein the first module further comprises at least one instruction for generating a third set, the third set including intersection points of graph segments in the first and second sets, and minimal segments from the first and second sets.

20. The product recited in claim 18 wherein the first and second orientations are substantially orthogonal.

21. The product recited in claim 18 wherein the first and third directions are substantially identical to each other and substantially orthogonal to the first layer, and the second and fourth directions are substantially identical to each other and substantially opposite to the first and third directions.

22. The product recited in claim 18 wherein the at least one instruction for generating the first set comprises:

- at least one instruction for recording first information regarding locations of each successive intersection with elements in a first layer while

proceeding from a first edge of the first layer to a second edge of the first layer; and
at least one instruction for adding second information regarding coverage of the locations by elements of other layers.

23. The product of claim 16 wherein
the product comprises a computer program product encoded in at least one computer readable medium;
the modules are software modules for processing information for generating the multi-layer graph; and
the at least one computer readable medium comprises at least one of the group consisting of a data storage medium and a data transmission medium, wherein the data storage medium includes at least one of the group consisting of a magnetic disk, an optical disc and a tape, and the data transmission medium includes at least one of the group consisting of the Internet, a wireline network and a wireless network.

24. A 2.5-D graph for use in multi-layer, integrated circuit routing, the graph comprising:
a first subgraph corresponding to a first circuit layer, the first subgraph including a set of routing segments selected using information from the first circuit layer and at least one other circuit layer; and
a second subgraph corresponding to a second circuit layer, the second subgraph including a set of routing segments selected using information from the second circuit layer and at least one other circuit layer.

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